

HAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL WINS
STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. WILLIAM J. COYNE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 1998

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, on May 2–4, more than 1200 students from across the United States will be in Washington, DC to compete in the national finals of We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution program. I would especially like to congratulate the Hampton High School State Championship team from Allison Park, Pennsylvania, which will represent the state of Pennsylvania in the competition. After months of studying constitutional issues to prepare for the competition, the students in Mrs. Tara O'Brien's sixth period political science class won the state competition, entitling them to participate in the national competition.

The We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution program provides curricular materials at upper elementary, middle, and high school levels for more than 75,000 teachers and 24 million students nationwide. The three-day national competition simulates a congressional hearing. Students demonstrate their knowledge by defending positions on historical and contemporary constitutional issues. Entire classes participate together, so students learn team skills in addition to civics.

The following are the students who will represent Hampton High and the state of Pennsylvania in the national finals: Angela Ambrose, Rebecca Amrhein, Aren Bierkan, Christine Brady, Heather Gahagan, Emily Huie, Jessica Kiefer, Lauren Klemens, Jessica Lin, Rina Mansukhani, Lauren Montgomery, Laura Ostapenko, Andrew Scharff, Christian Spearline, Countney Vetter, and Katrina Werger.

Again, I would like to congratulate these student son their accomplishments and wish them the best of luck in next week's competition. I am proud to represent such accomplished young people, and I look forward to meeting them when they visit Capitol Hill.

IN RECOGNITION OF CLARA
BARTSCH

HON. JOHN EDWARD PORTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 1998

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exemplary work of Ms. Clara Bartsch, who for many years has served as Illinois' Congressional Liaison for Medicare. Because Clara's employer, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, will not be retaining its contact with the Health Care Finance Administration, she will be leaving her position. Together with all members of the Illinois Congressional Delegation, I want to let Clara know how much we appreciate her dedication and her tremendous work on behalf of Medicare recipients throughout our state.

Every member of this body understands the vital role our offices fulfill in assisting constituents overcome difficulties in dealing with federal government agencies. As caseworkers endeavor to explain and interpret the often

confusing maze of federal rules, guidelines and regulations, they depend heavily upon liaison personnel. As all the caseworkers in my office and other offices in our delegation will attest, Clara Bartsch is among the very best liaisons in the business.

Clara's commitment to the people we all serve is second to no one. She consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty—making sure that all congressional inquiries are handled expeditiously and professionally. The caseworkers who have relied upon Clara will tell you that her responsiveness and outreach efforts are nothing short of outstanding. In particular, her annual Medicare Seminars have been invaluable to all of our offices, helping us stay on top of changes in the Medicare program and providing in-depth information on the latest developments.

In short, Mr. Speaker, Clara Bartsch leaves a legacy of outstanding service in her role as Medicare Liaison and has helped the entire Illinois delegation better serve the people we are privileged to represent. For her tremendous contributions, she has the gratitude of every member of our delegation and our very best wishes for her future success and happiness.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 3744 LEGIS-
LATION AMENDING THE FOOD
FOR PEACE PROGRAM

HON. GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 1998

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced a bill designed to help farmers participating in the PL 480 Food for Peace Program who have experienced trouble moving their product by rail to U.S. ports.

Under PL 480, the Department of Agriculture invites farmers and processors to sell their product (e.g. grain, peas, lentils, barley) to the federal government. At the time they advertise their tender, the Department also specifies where and when the product has to be delivered. Farmers and processors are able to calculate their bids based on the cost to produce, the cost associated with rail shipment, the time normally required to get empty rail cars, and the time needed to have the railroad move cars to the port specified by the Department. Successful bidders sign a contract with the Department prior to shipping their product, but they don't receive payment from the government until after it is delivered to the port.

This arrangement has generally worked well over the years, but last summer and fall a large number of farmers and processors—through no fault of their own—experienced tremendous difficulty abiding by the terms of their contracts with the Department. Rail congestion in the midwest and west caused many shipments to arrive late, thus missing sailing dates and generating expensive damage claims against farmers and processors. My bill would hold farmers and processors harmless against these kinds of damages.

It is unreasonable for the government to hold farmers and processors liable for damages in instances where they make a good faith effort to load and transport their product on a timely basis. Farmers and processors

surrender their product to a railroad for shipment to a port, but they have no ability to control its delivery and, under current program rules, they pay damages for late arrival.

As an aside, I am aware that the Department of Agriculture has relieved some PL 480 participants from damages arising from last summer's rail service difficulties in the midwest, but I don't think it prudent to leave the issue of future damages to the discretion of the Department. Farmers and processors need the certainty of knowing that they will not be liable for transportation problems beyond their control.

I ask all Members to cosponsor this legislation. The PL 480 Food for Peace Program is an important market for many farmers and processors, but under the current rules, it presents a whole host of unknowns that jeopardize future participation, especially in light of ongoing rail service problems.

SENSE OF CONGRESS ON 50TH AN-
NIVERSARY OF FOUNDING OF
MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 28, 1998

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, in commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the creation of the State of Israel, I rise to pay tribute to the pioneers and visionaries who survived the holocaust and who built this magnificent nation. Fifty years after its creation, Israel is still the lone beacon of democracy in the Middle East, and our most stalwart ally.

At midnight on May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was established as the British mandate over Palestine ended. The moment that Israel declared itself a free state, U.S. President Harry S. Truman of Independence, Missouri declared our country's support for this fledgling nation. President Truman's words still ring true. He said, "I had faith in Israel before it was established, I have faith in it now. I believe it has a glorious future before it—not just another sovereign nation, but as an embodiment of the great ideals of our civilization." On May 15, the day after President Truman recognized the state of Israel, the surrounding nations invaded to crush this newly free society.

Mr. Speaker, in 1993 I visited Israel to study their culture, their laws and their government, and I was impressed by the accomplishments of the citizens who built a thriving economy and ability to manage its diversity. Throughout all of challenges that this nation has faced, its citizens remain positive about the future and secure in their belief in democracy and personal liberty.

In 1998, 50 years after President Truman's prescient remarks, Israel is a vibrant democracy experiencing strong economic growth and a period of relative peace. As we congratulate the people of Israel on their 50th anniversary, we must not forget the mutual support and the strong ties that exist between us. As the Congressperson who represents President Truman's home, I feel a special connection to the people of Israel, and on this day I would like to congratulate them and wish them success as they decide on a common purpose that will unify the country.